

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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INRE-00 SIL-01 LAB-04 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /085 W
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O R 112121Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 464
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTIAGO 6882

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CI PGOV SHUM
SUBJECT: PINOCHET'S FIFTH ANNIVERSARY SPEECH

REF: 77 SANTIAGO 7475

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT PINOCHET RECONFIRMED HIS COMMITMENT TO THE OVERALL TIMEFRAME FOR THE TRANSITION PROCESS (NO ELECTIONS BEFORE 1985). FOLLOWING THE FORMAT OF EARLIER ANNIVERSARY ADDRESSES, PINOCHET DISCUSSED CHILE'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND HIS PLANS FOR ITS POLITICAL EVOLUTION. LONGER (110 MINUTES) AND BETTER CRAFTED THIS YEAR THAN IN THE PAST, THE SPEECH MET HEAD ON SOME COMPLAINTS RAISED BY CRITICS AND AT LEAST MENTIONED A NUMBER OF TOUCHY ISSUES. ON US/CHILE RELATIONS, PINOCHET SAID THE GOC NOTED A "RESURGENCE OF INTERVENTIONISM UNDER NEW GUISES ON THE PART OF CERTAIN INFLUENTIAL SECTORS," BUT SAW SOME HOPEFUL SIGNS OF CHANGE. PINOCHET ATTACHED IMPORTANCE TO BOTH GOVERNMENTS' BELIEF THAT THE LETELIER CASE "REMAIN IN JUDICIAL CHANNELS AND NOT BE DRAGGED INTO THE POLITICAL ARENA AS SOME GROUPS IN BOTH COUNTRIES WISH." HE SAID
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CHILE HAS COOPERATED FULLY IN CLARIFYING THE CRIME, "THE WAY A CHIEF OF STATE PROCEEDS WHEN HE HAS A CLEAN CONSCIENCE AND HAS DONE NOTHING TO HIDE." END SUMMARY.

2. ON THE TRANSITION: PINOCHET INSISTED THAT THE TRANSITION PROCESS MUST REMAIN GRADUAL AND THAT THERE WOULD BE NO POLITICAL ELECTIONS UNTIL 1985. HE GAVE NO DATE FOR THE

PLEBISCITE ON THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION; SAID THE VOTERS MIGHT BE GIVEN A CHOICE ON SPECIFIC POINTS BUT ON ALTERNATIVE DRAFTS; AND PROMISED THAT OTHER POINTS OF VIEW WOULD BE CONSIDERED IN THE DRAFTING PROCESS. HE DID NOT DISCUSS ANY SPECIFICS OF THE NEW ORDER EXCEPT TO STRESS THAT ADHERENTS STRAYING FROM "THE ESSENTIAL IDEALS OF CHILE" WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO PLAY.

3. ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS: PINOCHET QUOTED DEMOCRATIC POLITICIANS BACK IN 1973 AS SAYING THAT IT WOULD TAKE A DECADE TO REBUILD CHILE AFTER THE ALLENDE EXPERIENCE. HE BLAMED THE TWO PRECEDING REGIMES FOR USING CHILE AS A LABORATORY FOR INTERNATIONALLY-INSPIRED DOCTRINES WHICH BROUGHT ON THE COLLAPSE. DRAWING ON STATISTICS TO SHOW IMPROVEMENTS ACROSS THE BOARD SINCE 1975, PINOCHET ASKED WORKERS TO CONSIDER HOW THEY WOULD BE FARING TODAY HAD ALLENDE CONTINUED IN OFFICE. PINOCHET ANNOUNCED SOME SMALL BENEFITS TO HELP THE "POOREST OF THE POOR" AND PROMISED WORKERS THAT THINGS WOULD BE GETTING BETTER. IN THE MEANTIME, HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE COUNTRY IS PURSUING THE ONLY VIABLE COURSE TOWARD FUTURE PROSPERITY AND THAT ORGANIZED LABOR, AMONG OTHERS, WOULD BE WILLING TO CONTINUE TO MAKE SACRIFICES. WE WOULD DO HIS BEST TO AMELIORATE CONDITIONS BUT THE STARK TRUTH WAS THAT LABOR DISCIPLINE HAD TO BE MAINTAINED AND HE WOULD DO SO.

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4. ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: CHILE HAS UNJUSTLY BEEN ACCUSED OF CONDUCTING AN ANTI-COMMUNIST CRUSADE, SAID PINOCHET, WHEN ALL CHILE WANTS IS TO BE LEFT ALONE BY THE MASSIVE COMMUNIST LED CONSPIRACY AGAINST IT. HE MADE A POINT OF CHILE'S TIES WITH CHINA (PRC) AND JAPAN. TRUE TO ITS WORD, CHILE HAD ADMITTED TO UN AD HOC WORKING GROUP AS SOON AS ADEQUATE GUIDELINES HAD BEEN DRAFTED. PINOCHET HOPED ITS REPORT WOULD BE ACCURATE, BUT IN ANY EVENT CHILE COULD NO LONGER BE SUED AS A PRETEXT FOR NOT PERMITTING ON-SITE INVESTIGATIONS IN COUNTRIES WITH MUCH WORSE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.

-- PERU, ECUADOR: VISITS SUCH AS JUNTA MEMBER MERIONO'S TO LIMA AND MENDOZA'S TO QUITO WERE VISIBLE SIGNS OF CLOSE TIES. RELATIONS WITH PERU "HAVE REACHED NO OPTIMAL LEVEL."

-- BOLIVIA: UNFORTUNATELY, FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS, BOLIVIA BROKE RELATIONS, THEREBY WORKING COUNTER TO "ITS

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INTEREST IN RESOLVING ITS PROBLEM."

-- UNITED STATES: SEE SUMMARY.

5. ON ARGENTINA: CHILE ENTERED INTO TALKS WITH ARGENTINA WITH THE BEST POSSIBLE FAITH IN FINDING A COMMON SOLUTION (TO THE BEAGLE CHANNEL RELATED PROBLEMS) AND IS STILL HOPEFUL. NEVERTHELESS, CHILE IS "A NATION THAT NEVER HAS CONFUSED FIRMNESS WITH STRIDENCY NOR QUIET PURPOSE WITH WEAKNESS," AND THE GOC WILL RESOLUTELY DEFEND CHILEAN SOVEREIGNTY RIGHTS. AT THE END OF HIS SPEECH, PINOCHET INDIRECTLY RETURNED TO THIS THEME BY REASSURING THE PEOPLE THAT NATIONAL DEFENSE WAS IN TERRIFIC SHAPE, AND "ABLE TO MEET ANY POSSIBLE FOREIGN AGGRESSION."

6. TOUCHY SUBJECTS:

--THE AMNESTY: PINOCHET SAID HE WANTED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT HIS APRIL AMNESTY WAS INTENDED TO COVER GOVERNMENT FORCES AS WELL AS THOSE OPPOSED TO THE REGIME ("TO PARDON ONE SIDE IN A QUASI-CIVIL WAR AND NOT THE OTHER IS ILLGOICAL");
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--DISAPPEARED: ALTHOUGH MANY WISHED TO WUSE THIS PROBLEM AS A POLITIICAL ISSUE THE GOC WOULD TAKE STEPS TO FACILITATE

FINDINGS OF PRESUMPTIVE DEATH TO HELP RELATIVES WITH ESTATE PROBLEMS AND WOULD CONTINUE TO INVESTIGATE INDIVIDUAL CASES WHEN EVIDENCE WARRANTED. BASICALLY, HOWEVER, THE PAST WAS PAST.

--THE JANUARY 1978 PLEBISCITE: CRITICS HAVE SAID THAT HE SPRUNG THE VOTE ON THE PEOPLE BEFORE OPPONENTS HAD TIME TO MOBILIZE. "ABSOLUTELY TRUE. THEY DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO MANIPULATE THE POPULAR WILL THROUGH AN AVALANCHE OF OUTSIDE FUNDED PROPAGANDA OR TO USE THE TECHNIQUES THEY LEARNED FURING LONG ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS. I UNDERSTAND THAT BECAUSE OF THIS SOME FELT LEFT OUT. LO SIENTO MUCHO."

--ON INTERNATIONAL ISOLATION: THE SAME PEOPLE WHO TODAY CHARGE THAT WE CANNOT GET THE SUPPORT FROM ABROAD WE NEED TO PROTECT OURSELVES INTERNATIONALLY (I.E. ARGENTINA) UNTIL WE RETURN TO TRADITIONAL DEMOCRACY ARE THOSE WHO TWO YEARS AGO SAID WE NEEDED DEMOCRACY TO GAIN ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL FINANCING TO RECUPERATE ECONOMICALLY. AS NOW PROVED, CHILEANS WORKING TOGETHER CAN TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES.

--LEIGH'S OUSTER: "AFTER PROGRESSIBELY STRAYING FROM THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND AIRING HIS DIFFERENCES PUBLICLY THUS IMPEDING THE EFFICIENT ACTION BY THE GOVERNMENT, HE AGGRAVATED THE SITUATION THROUGH DECLARATIONS TO A FOREIGN NEWSPAPER (PERHAPS UNINTENTIONALLY) SERIOUSLY COMPROMISING NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE PRESTIGE OF THE ARMED FORCES. BUT, "THE CRISIS SHOWED, HOWEVER, THAT THE AIR FORCE COULD COPE WITH SUCH A SERIOUS CHALLENGE AND HAS PROVEN THAT THE ARMED FORCES ARE UNITED," AND A DEBT IS CONFIDENTIAL

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OWED TO GENERAL LEIGH FOR HIS SERVICES TO THE NATION IN THE PAST.

7. COMMENT: THERE WAS LITTLE NEW AND NO REAL SURPRISES IN THIS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY SPEECH. AT A MINIMUM WE THOUGHT PINOCHET MIGHT FIX A DEFINITE DATE FOR THE CONSTITUTIONAL PLEBISCITE. THERE WERE SOME WHO HOPED FOR AN ADVANCE IN THE ELECTION SCHEDULE FROM 1985. PINOCHET IS STICKING BY HIS PLAN.
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